

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 TAIPEI 000192

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EAP/RSP/TC, EAP/PA, EAP/PD -  
ROBERT PALLADINO  
DEPARTMENT PASS AIT/WASHINGTON

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [TW](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: CROSS-STRAIT CHARTER FLIGHTS,  
U.S.-CHINA-TAIWAN RELATIONS

11. Cross-Strait Charter Flights

A) "[We] Sincerely Hope that Cross-Strait Two-way  
Charter Flights for the Chinese New Year Will Fly  
through Clouds and Open a New Page for Win-win  
Situations for Both Sides [of the Taiwan Strait]"

The conservative, pro-unification "United Daily News"  
editorialized (1/16):

". The cross-Strait charter flight plan for the Chinese New Year, which concerns the transportation rights of more than 300,000 Taiwan businessmen who want to return from China to Taiwan, is just a small step in the interactions between two sides of the Taiwan Strait. Everyone is watching closely the long-term effects of this chess move, hoping that it will not disappear quickly like a beautiful fireworks show. Starting from the charter flights for the Chinese New Year, the cross-Strait policies that the government needs to deal with are trade issues such as the three links, financial controls, and the protection of investments across the Taiwan Strait. With these issues as a foundation, the other political 'keynote' issues that need to be dealt with include Taiwan's constitutional design, national identity, and Taiwan's role and status in the region. The charter flight plans for the Chinese New Year may seem like a small matter, but if rumors that 'the United States and Japan also had a hand in pushing for the charter flight plans behind the scene' did appear, it also showed that regional security is an issue of common concern for the international community. If President Chen Shui-bian could realize that he should act proactively in seeking to play a role in the peaceful development of cross-Strait ties rather than waiting until being forced by international pressure, he could then be regarded as a wise leader. ."

B) "A-Bian and Hu [Jintao] Each Make Concessions,  
Starting a New Opportunity for Cross-Strait Situations"

Journalist Wang Ming-yi noted in the centrist, pro-status quo "China Times" (1/16):

". The two-way charter flights across the Taiwan Strait have indeed created an improved atmosphere in the Taiwan Strait and an opportunity for both sides of the Taiwan Strait to resume talks. But while both sides are acting under the concept of 'strategic clarity,' the populist atmosphere triggered by [Taiwan's] 'referendum law' and [Beijing's] 'anti-secession law' is still the shadow that keeps haunting the Taiwan Strait. The flexible communication model demonstrated by the talks between Taipei and Beijing over the charter flights will be a whole new political effort for Hu Jintao and Chen Shui-bian, who are eager to create a new situation across the Taiwan Strait."

C) "Is a Model for Air Links at Hand?"

The pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" commented in an editorial (1/16):

". Actually, the two sides gradually and tactfully reached consensus about the substantive model of the air links before yesterday's talks. The significance of the talks in Macau were [sic] not only to make the deal official, but also in the model of negotiation established. Many believe that this latest model of negotiations may very well be the model used for talks on more permanent cross-strait direct links.

"Indeed, this model is the bottom line beyond which the Taiwan government must not go. Any further concessions risk reducing cross-strait talks to negotiations over 'domestic affairs.' While the government officials involved in negotiations went in 'unofficial' capacities, they were government officials nonetheless. These aviation talks, practically speaking, cannot proceed without officials' involvement to begin with, since none of the issues being discussed can possibly

be decided by members of the private sector. This demonstrates that cross-strait links are in reality international links and not domestic links. As for the flight routes agreed on yesterday, they are in fact international air routes from Chinese cities to Hong Kong and then from Hong Kong to Taiwan. In this regard, the Taiwan government has not compromised the public interest. .

"While both the Chinese and Taiwan government claim that the charter flights are isolated cases tailored to serve Taiwanese businessmen, the question on everyone's mind is nevertheless this: Will cross-strait direct links be made official soon? However, the question that the Taiwan Government should really ask itself is this: Is it ready to face up and deal with the potential problems of such official direct links?"  
D) "Air Pact Marks Step to Official Talks"

The pro-independence, English-language "Taiwan News" said in an editorial (1/18):

". If the charter flights proceed smoothly, they may provide a favorable basis for future interaction, but it would be nave to expect that solutions to political differences between Taiwan and the PRC can be realized so long as inherent political obstacles continue to exist, such as Beijing's insistence on acceptance of its 'one China principle' as a precondition for talks.

"Nevertheless, the talks show that Beijing can no longer avoid the involvement of the two governments in consultations and that a significant step toward the resumption of officially authorized consultations between Taipei and Beijing has been taken."

## 12. U.S.-China-Taiwan Relations

### A) "Getting to Know China Again on a Global Scale"

Professor Chu Yun-han of National Taiwan University's Department of Political Science said in the centrist, pro-status quo "China Times" (1/17):

". Even though Washington tried to persuade [them otherwise] by all means [possible], the major members in the European Union reached a consensus that they will withdraw the arms ban on China this year. The policy shift will put another scar on the relationship between the United States and her European traditional allies after the chasm caused by the war in Iraq, and the strategic meaning goes even beyond the former one. This means that there will be structural slack in the unipolar security dominated by the United States in the 'post-Cold War era.' . [W]hat matters is apparently the different judgment, incrementally formed, [that the E.U. takes] on the critical question whether the rise of China constitutes strategic chance or threat.

"More surprisingly, China started to shake the U.S. exclusive position in the sphere of ideology. The 'Foreign Policy Center' established under the leadership of British Prime Minister Tony Blair, published a book entitled 'Beijing Consensus' written by Goldman Sachs senior consultant Joshua Ramo in 2004. The book has [had many repercussions]. The contrast of the 'Beijing Consensus' is the 'Washington Consensus,' which is an important symbol of the 'post-Cold War era' and the core content is the neo-liberalism centered by capitals and markets. For more than the past decade, the United States has promoted this policy prescription all around the world wholeheartedly, and several developing countries proactively (or were forced to) conducted reform under the neo-liberalism. The globalization led by the United States is almost equivalent to the spread of the 'Washington Consensus.' In recent years, several countries started to re-think about the 'Washington Consensus,' and they received different implications from the experience of the development of China. For several policy elites in the Third World, the 'China model' indicates that it is possible to remain autonomous development during the process of getting involved in globalization. China adopts the pragmatic philosophy of 'touching stones in order to pass a river' in its development policy, and is willing to try every innovative system. China, however, does not blindly believe in economics textbooks or wholly adopts the western model, but starts from the practical situation of itself. The essence of the 'Beijing consensus' is the co-existence of multiple models, and the re-evaluation of the experiences of the development of China means that the thinking of one 'paradigm' has started to fade away.

"Currently, the cross-Straits relationship is at the turning point in history, and [Taiwan's] policy toward

China is on the eve of change. During the process of figuring out a new thinking in the policy, Taiwan's political figures and press should not understand the change by a 'Taiwan-centered' perspective, otherwise Taiwan will get deeper and deeper in deadlock. It is necessary to start learning how to measure China again by a global scale, think again about the challenges, opportunities, and alternatives that Taiwan will face."

B) "Why Can't [Taiwan] Change Its National Name?"

The pro-independence "Liberty Times" editorialized (1/15):

"Former Mainland Affairs Council Chairwoman Tsai Ing-wen days ago pointed out at a think tank in the United States that the status quo of Taiwan is that it is independent, and there is no need to declare independence again. Moreover, even if Taiwan changes its name in the process of amending the constitution, it has nothing to do with a change in the status quo. .

"The Taiwan people amended the R.O.C. constitution in 1991 and explicitly distinguished the cross-strait relationship as being of one country on each side of the Taiwan Strait. Ever since, democratic reform, including the overall elections in the congress and direct presidential elections regulated that Taiwan's authority will be elected by Taiwan people through democratic procedures, and will have nothing to do with the 1.3 billion people on the other side of the Taiwan Strait. Some call the process 'peaceful revolution,' and some call it 'peaceful nation-building.' No matter what [it is called], the process explains that although we keep on using the Republic of China as the name of the country, the R.O.C. after 1991 is quite different from the R.O.C. of the past, especially the R.O.C. after 1945. Under these circumstances, there are even fewer connections between Taiwan and China.

"The population of People's Republic of China consists of 1.3 billion people on that side of the Taiwan Strait, while there are 23 million people in Taiwan on this side; China is a sovereign independent country, and so is Taiwan. This is the status quo in the Taiwan Strait. Under the domestic principle of 'sovereignty should be owned by the people' and the international principle of 'self-determination,' 2.3 million Taiwan people are the masters of Taiwan and are, thus, sources of the legitimacy of the R.O.C. Taiwan's political changes and international participation should respect the choices made by the 2.3 million people. Therefore, referendums, revises on the constitution, the plan to change the country's name, flag, and anthem are the presentation of Taiwan's internal democracy, which does not involve in any change in the status quo across the Taiwan Strait. As long as Taiwan continues on fulfilling her international obligations, the international community has no reason refusing to recognize Taiwan. ."

PAAL